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THE RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK

The War and the Woman Point of View

RHODA E. McCULLOCH

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COMMITTEE ON THE WAR
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FOREWORD

This booklet is one in a series appearing from time to time under the general heading, The Religious Outlook. These publications are being brought out under the auspices of the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook in the hope that they may help to focus attention on some of the larger issues facing the Church after the war.

The Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook was constituted, while the war was still in progress, by the joint action of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and the General War-Time Commission of the Churches "to consider the state of religion as revealed or affected by the war, with special reference to the duty and opportunity of the Churches, and to prepare its findings for submission to the Churches." Full reports of the Committee will be submitted in the near future. In the meantime the present series of booklets, issued under the auspices of the Committee, is offered as a preliminary endeavor to emphasize certain phases of the task of the Church that particularly challenge its attention at the present hour.

Communications designed for the Committee may be addressed to the Secretary, Rev. Samuel McCrea Cavert, 105 East 22d Street, New York.

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THE WAR AND THE WOMAN POINT OF VIEW

The Great War has revealed the fact that one of the least-considered and least-used of the world's stores of power lies latent in the minds of women. The morale of a country whose men were away at war was, in large part, the morale of the women of that country. If in the crises of the war statesmen turned from the battle line to weigh and estimate the force back of the line, their estimate was usually in terms of the hopes and fears, the resistance or the despair of the women. The thoughts of a woman in a French village street became either a national asset or a national liability. In facing the tasks of adjustment that lie before us we may well consider whether the woman's point of view toward the world as it is and as it should be is not as important an asset in our national life now as in the days of the war.

Whether or not it was because of the desperate pass to which war brought us matters little; it is undebatable that the past five years have brought about a new consideration of the contribution of women to the projects of society. Civilization had been built on the assumption that woman was physically inferior to man, yet with civilization falling about our ears it was

discovered that in many cases woman's powers of endurance could be stretched to compass tasks which had always been considered man's work. The life of the centuries had brought about unequal mental development for men and women, but as occasion demanded many women slipped easily and naturally into positions demanding acumen, initiative and resourcefulness.

Governments had been built on the theory that not only their creation but their preservation depended upon the contribution of thought and life which men could give; the chief argument given by the opponents of woman suffrage had been that the vote could be given only as a reward to those who could defend the State in time of war. Yet within the past five years the women of England, France and the United States have been impressively told that the very existence of these nations depended not only upon the man strength of those nations but also upon the quality and extent of woman effort. Perhaps future historians will find that the greatest discovery of the years of the war was the discovery not only of the potentialities of woman's service but of the necessity of considering woman's point of view equally with that of men in affairs of the Church, the nation, and the world.

Great as has been the result of this growing discovery to society, its most spectacular result has been upon women themselves. They know

now that many ancient inhibitions upon them as members of society have no true foundation. No one believes that the needs of war-time have created out of a vacuum capacities and powers needed only for that particular emergency. The experience of these years has merely exposed social values which have always existed. Women are conscious as never before not only that they can be something more than the wards of society, but that the world has actual need of their peculiar contribution to its thinking and achievement. There is an increasing feeling, expressed in many languages, that a woman will find her safest protection and render her largest service only when she has an equal share with men in matters social, economic and political.

The Church and Woman's Enlarged Experience

One result of the activities of the war years has been to produce a deeper belief on the part of women in group action. Men had learned this lesson through centuries of experience; for women the conviction grew in the night of a world crisis. Women whose only working experience of the value of group action had been that of the local sewing circle have discovered that this same social force of group action can be released in other circles as wide and varied as the world itself. And, even more significant, whereas the work of the local sewing circle

was considered to be peculiarly woman's work, it has now been revealed that the world activities of men are dependent for their effectiveness upon the mobilized effort of women, or of men and women combined for social action. The arms of men could fully prevail only as the organized effort of women conserved and made available the material resources of the world.

The question now is, in what manner and through what agencies will women express their new belief in corporate action now that the war is over? Although in many instances it may have been the love of the spectacular, the desire to be in the game, that launched many movements of women, especially during the earlier days of the war, an honest estimate must reckon with much more significant reasons for women's war activities. Study the history of the organized effort of any local community if you would find a basis for the use today of the power of woman effort which was revealed by the need of a world at war.

1. In the first place, the war furnished an opportunity on a world scale for the fulfilment of the maternal instinct. One of the greatest posters of the war is a picture of the World-Mother holding in her arms the suffering of those of her children most directly hurt by the cruelties of warfare. The work of the Red Cross was a relief to women of varying degrees of resourcefulness, an opportunity never before offered to express one of the greatest, least-used

forces of society. It was democratic, for the card of admission was the desire to serve. It demanded the impossible, and women to whom the challenge of the impossible had never been given rose to their quotas of so many socks in so many weeks, and to their share of hours of service in the village work-room as though to prove to themselves, at least, that the same power which tradition and custom had confined to the care of their children could be stretched to include the need of all the children of men.

The Red Cross was but one of the organizations in whose service many women learned for the first time that concerted effort on the part of all the women of a given community could give universal value and effectiveness to what they had one time thought merely the duty or privilege of an individual. Careful use of food materials, the mark of a good housewife, was given community-wide expression and thereby affected the welfare of men and women in far parts of the world. Thrift in the use of money was changed from a matter concerning only the future status of the family to that of a factor in the world's financial scheme. Even in the realm of life-conservation women found their responsibility and power swiftly widening out from concern for their own children to a concern for the moral integrity of other women's sons encamped all over the world, and of other women's daughters who were meeting the hazards of wartime in every nation of the earth.

The scene has shifted but little by the closing of the war period. The same power of the maternal remains as a creative force in society, trained to new intensity, prepared for deeper sacrificial use, expectant and ready for wider territories in which to operate. Suffering and need are in the wake of war, deeper and more terrible than our imagination can picture, stretching on through generations of consequences which will tax to the utmost the creative sympathy of the followers of the Healer of Nazareth.

Does the Church in its awakening reckon with this healing force, hidden deep in its life? It has in the past turned over to women much of its machinery for the relief of human need. But this activity on the part of women has usually been considered as merely auxiliary to the main business of the Church, whose policies and programs have been created and administered for the most part by men. In the necessities which face the Church of tomorrow there may well be a freer play of woman spirit and initiative than there has been in the past if the contribution of the Church is to be complete. The unique elements which woman thought usually adds to the consideration of a situation of need, or of a program for meeting that need, would find their highest value if they were used by the Church in the preliminary stages of its plans rather than at the point of their execution.

In estimating some of these unique elements

of woman thought, there is some question as to whether the present-day machinery of the Church will give scope for the exercise in world circles of that unused power, but lately awakened to new social significance, the power of the maternal instinct.

2. Another fact which is revealed by a study of the response of the women of any community to the appeal of war-time organization is that modern women have not had enough to do to occupy their whole time and strength and engage their complete interest and attention. While the minds of men have been busily inventing ways and means of changing the work of a housewife from the drudgery of a century ago to the comparative ease with which it is possible today to conduct a household, those same minds have maintained with great insistence their ancient contention that woman's place is in the home and only in the home. They have not understood that it is impossible today to make a home within four walls. The doors and windows of a modern home are the open doors and windows of the community itself, and a woman cannot create the spirit of a home save as she shares in creating the spirit of the community in which she lives.

To those who have most closely studied the woman movement as it has developed in practically every country on the globe, it has seemed as though the war offered at the psychological moment an explosive vent for an unused power

and resourcefulness which might otherwise have been expressed in other and possibly less socially helpful manifestations.

A modern bakery advertised its wares in the letter of a mother to her soldier son: "Dear son, we are using ———— bread now, so that I can have more time for war work." Business men have discovered that there is a new thing under the sun—the spare time of women from homes—and department stores are advertising the merits and advantages of half-time positions. Plain, everyday women have suddenly increased their output. After the experience of achievement that a 100 per cent day has brought, many of them will be no longer satisfied with a day which registers only 40 per cent of effectiveness.

Does the Church in its new program count on the fact that women have demonstrated that they have time and strength to give to any program which can use them to their maximum? The widening work of the Church will be possible in the proportion in which it expects not dilettante effort, but the maximum output of women who have learned how to live on twenty-four hours a day. The old appeal to do certain small "stints" for the Church will only serve to lower its dignity in the eyes of a woman who, in less significant organizations, has been given an opportunity to use her best self and spend her highest effort.

3. The swift response that the women of the country made to the appeals of war-time organi-

zations was a relief for an unused maternal instinct, now made socially effective; it was an opportunity to use time and strength for which modern life had given them no outlet. It seemed also to be more than this: it was a chance to sacrifice in a cause great enough to draw out deep allegiance.

The Church has always taught the fundamental of Christian living, the way of sacrifice, to two types of hearers. Men who have from immemorial ages fulfilled the teaching and preaching function of the Church have spoken of sacrifice in terms of clashing spears and sounding drums, and the man in the pews has dreamed of masculine causes, political or economic, in which, by the grace of God, he might one day lose his political or economic life for a great principle. If women have figured in this dream it has usually been in the role of one who makes possible a home out of which the warrior for social righteousness steps for combat with the world, someone in whom he can take just pride, "my wife."

But the woman is not forgotten in the exposition of the way of sacrifice; a paragraph or two is concerned with the ancient sacrificial love of a mother for her child, and her inevitable conclusion is that the sternest demand that Christ makes to his followers means for her not a struggle toward impossible heights of self-achievement, but merely the fulfilment of a fundamental necessity of her being.

Great companies of women throughout the

world have found satisfaction in sacrifice for the cause of women, the demand for equal suffrage, and for equal economic and social opportunity—a cause which has seldom won even cursory notice from the Church. Little social value has been attached to the sacrificial spirit which women have put into the cause of justice for women industrial workers.

In a girl's report of a meeting of striking workers there is the following significant paragraph:

"A crowd was coming down-stairs and in that crowd one person caught my eye, a woman who had been in the service thirty-eight years. She was surrounded by a lot of kids who were laughing, but her face was serious and set. We had to win, not for the kids, but for women like this who had given everything. As she came close to me I said: 'I think it is wonderful for you to be here!' She said: 'No more wonderful than for the other girls. I am satisfied that my fate is in good hands.' A woman who could have been my mother satisfied to leave her fate in our hands! These are the things that made us fight."

But this cause has, through the necessities of the case, been self-centered and to that extent limited. Its objective has been splendidly social, in that it aimed for equality of opportunity for all women workers, but it necessarily concerned itself primarily with the welfare of the group most in need of social justice. With the demands of war-time many women for the first

time experienced the satisfaction of giving themselves completely to a cause which touched the home and heart of every citizen of the world.

Can the Church interpret the cause for which it exists in terms which will capture the emotional idealism of women? In the main, they are not likely to be interested by the appeal of sacrifice for sacrifice's sake. Every woman's life has enough genuine self-denial in its days to discount the thrill of anything less than a big stake.

Nor will women be widely interested in the cause of the Church for the Church's sake. They will be swift to see the fallacies of any program built to "save the Church." "We must capitalize the fine products of the World War for the Church," said a leader in one of the large religious denominations. "Why not capitalize them for the community?" was the query of his women auditors. But he entirely missed the point and went away sorrowful, deploring this seeming lack of devotion to the institution of the Church. Men find it more easy than do women to give their lives to the cause of an institution such as the Church or the State. Women usually see the individuals behind the organization—and on its outskirts.

A Deepening Instinct for Freedom

The new self-consciousness of women has found expression not only in their growing belief

in group action, but in a deepening instinct for freedom. At this point, too, the community activities of war-time gave timely release to what students of the woman movement believed to be a most dangerously repressed attitude of mind on the part of women the world over. There have been many belittling misinterpretations of woman's growing desire for freedom, because at some points it seems to have as its motive merely a desire to be like men. The groups of young English girls who in the spring of 1919 used to stroll down the Strand at midnight smoking cigarettes probably congratulated themselves on being able to do what their brothers were doing. Yet, at its best, this bit of bravado was a crude attempt to celebrate the dethronement of some of the inhibitions set up by society to keep woman in the place which tradition had dictated for her.

One of the contributing causes for this change in woman's point of view toward social conventions is to be found in an historical study of the industrial order. The industrial system of the world before the war had been built on an assumption only recently debated as questionable, the assumption that the world's trade must be carried on with the help of cheap woman labor. One of the leading papers of Japan states that in May, 1919, forty-two spinning mills employed 29,000 males and 96,000 females; 5,000 of the total, mostly girls, under fourteen years of age. The enforcement of the proposal of the

eight-hour day by the International Labor Convention would shorten the working day by forty per cent. From the smallest process of industry to the most technical professions, the commonly accepted principle of payment has been the lowest possible wage for the woman and a market value wage for the man who did the same grade of work.

With this as its practice, the world persistently professed in all of its expressions of public opinion its belief in the sacredness of womanhood. Conventions were built around the accepted standard of woman's conduct and maintained by society long after the disappearance of the savage conditions that once warranted them. All of these safeguards for the protection of womanhood, with the increasing use of woman labor in cheap industrial processes, men gradually transferred from all women to "women like my wife." Yet women in general, especially those who were nearest to the invisible line of economic dependence upon an industrial system in which women worked under such disadvantages, have been increasingly aware of the mockery of certain chivalrous arguments for circumscribing the rights of a woman to her own life, her liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Then came the war and with it the generally accepted belief that women could be used widely and effectively, sometimes in places too crowded and busy for the entrance of certain artificial conventions to which many women had been

accustomed. In Woolwich arsenal, employing 30,000 girls, one whole dormitory block was set apart for "lady workers," an incongruous survival of the ancient idea that "women like my wife" must have especial protection from all that might make them "unladylike."

The general acceptance of a place in society for women not hitherto granted to them, and the discovery on the part of women themselves of unused powers and resources, have seemed to strike the match to a long slumbering restlessness, and women throughout the world have begun to proclaim in action their rebellion against limitations in whose reasonable basis they have long disbelieved.

Yet their rebellion seems to leap the point at which it might have been aimed. Women do not want freedom to be like men; they want to be free to be themselves. In the report, published in January, 1919, of the Women's Trade Union League of England, there is an excellent summary of this post-war point of view of women workers:

"There is a great stirring of activity, a spirit of enterprise, among the ex-munition workers which is of the happiest augury for the future; no question here of human material willing to submit blindly to the buffetings of Fate. We have to deal with *self-determining personalities*, alert for the shaping of their own future."

It may even be said that men themselves recognize the fact that the release of hitherto un-

used women power in the life of today will mean a new and unpredictable force let loose in society. Perhaps much of the opposition to proposed methods for releasing this new force arises from fear of the unknown.

In a recent public utterance ex-Secretary of the Treasury, William G. McAdoo, speaks confidently and hopefully of the new woman electorate as "an independent body of voters which will be vital for the future of our country, inasmuch as they will forego party affiliations to cast their ballots on the issues of the day. Women bring fresh minds to the problems of the day and can vote according to the highest standards and conceptions of independent citizenship."

Whether or not women will be independent voters, or whether it is desirable that they should be, is not the point. It is significant that men expect them to be different in their political manifestations.

Within the space of five short years the ordinary everyday woman has been led into thinking in realms which were at one time closed to her either by the mandates of society or by the choice of her own unawakened spirit. She has been thinking about war and its reasons for being. The real significance of any intelligent protest, however unavailing it be, on the part of women against war as a method of settling international arguments lies not in the nature of the protest, but rather in the fact that women

consider it within their province to speak as women about matters which have always been conceded to be the business of men alone. To this question of war the woman mind brings its peculiar contributions. The woman sees the human values behind war's cold theories. At this point she is essentially personal. The food blockade could not for her be dismissed as necessary tactics in world warfare. Again she saw the people back of the strategy.

The ordinary everyday woman has begun to think of politics as never before. Women whose thinking had been stirred for the first time by their sudden plunge into world consciousness began to see the relation between the political situation in their own ward and the necessity of sending their sons into the perils of a world war. Here, too, women bring a keen sense of personal values. If they are given fair initiation to the political world, they will bring a valuable contribution to its program and practice. They will be likely to see it not as a game to be played for the sake of the game, but as a means for accomplishing certain social results. In a recent election of state officials a body of women, convinced that one of the candidates was an unprincipled opponent of the cause of justice for women workers, organized a campaign against his election. This they prefaced with a manifesto to the opposing candidate that their campaign must be construed in nowise as a moral support for him. They wished merely

to cast a decisive vote against the enemy of their cause.

There are many uncertainties in the unpredictable days ahead for the Church, for the State, and for that new thing which the war has discovered for us, the common life of a complex world order. To men the adventure of life is an old story; to women the pages still unturned are full of the thrill of the unexpected and the unknown. What new values would be released for the decisions of tomorrow if the minds of women hitherto effective only within the home, could be brought to bear directly upon the problems of the hour!

This storehouse of power must be released not only because it may be a reservoir of possibilities for help in bringing in the new world order; it must be released because there is increasing danger in its being pressed back into its old prisonings. There will come a day of wide recognition of the social danger of chaotic, untutored, undirected thinking on the part of so great a fraction of the whole society as women represent. Even more, that meaningless substitute for thinking, made up of apprehensions and prejudices, expression of intuitive likes and dislikes, which society has always expected from women, will be deplored as uncreative and antisocial. Out of the very inactivity of mind and purpose to which our modern society more or less condemns all women save those few who dare to thrust their hand up out of the depths—

out of this dead level of inaction there is born that spirit of prejudice and intolerance, that tendency to act on blind impulse, which is traditionally accredited to women.

The Church has given little scope for woman thought save in those parts of its program distinctly labeled as woman's service. We have forgotten the dignified part which women played in the early days of the Church. Today she is an "auxiliary" to men, and in those informal assemblies for group thinking which are convened from time to time she is usually termed a "guest."

What Women May Contribute Today

What sort of world are we facing now that the war is over? It may be well to suggest some of the problems before us in which the woman point of view may helpfully factor.

1. In the first place, it is a tired world. For five years the work of the world has been done at a velocity never before achieved. The language of the war posters was a revelation of the hysteria in which we lived and worked. "Speed up," "England expects," "*Jusqu'au bout.*" The psychological result of this intensity of life must be estimated at more than its cost to physical welfare, for it was bent on the processes of destruction. A newspaper correspondent, writing of a recent visit to northern France, says:

"The revival from death is a slow convales-

cence. The mind of the people is sick. There is no return to normal life, and the blessed word 'reconstruction,' spoken in Paris as a magic word, a word of power, is only a fetish and a will-o'-the-wisp."

How can a world so depleted in nervous energy awake now to the fact that life has gone out of many principles upon which the old world order was built—how can such a world rise to the adventure of building new things where the customary and the traditional no longer appear?

It is a task for youth, but much of the world's youth has gone, by a strange irony, the objective of all of the destructive forces to which the best creative effort of five years has been turned.

There is a latent force in society, so young in experience, with such unused strength, such untested powers of emotional idealism as to compare at many points with that strength of youth upon which states and nations have always depended for their growth. Women bring new minds, new daring, new hopefulness to a time in which the mind and spirit of world-builders is jaded and worn. There will be as much risk in experimenting with this new force as with any untried thing. The adventure of creative faith that will initiate the use of the power latent in the woman movement in projects of world-building will be comparable to the perennial act of faith in which in every realm of life old men

turn over to young men the accrued results of their life work.

President Wilson has but recently thrown down a tremendous challenge to all thinking people:

"We have either got to be provincials or statesmen. We have either got to be ostriches or eagles. . . . Now by being an eagle, I mean leaving the mists lying close to the ground, getting up on strong wings into those spaces where you can see all the affairs of mankind, seeing how the world appears."

It will take the daring of inexperienced statesmen to make such flights as these. Can women out of their very newness to participation in affairs of moment bring that intensity of imagination in which the true values of the problems of communities and nations will stand revealed? Can the Church afford to lose the opportunity of making the first experimental use of woman statesmanship? Perhaps women could demonstrate in their own home church, if given larger opportunity than they have had in the past, that they could bring to its problems not only vision and insight but that more practical power of following the moment of clear intuitive vision with a commensurate plan.

2. It is a world of twisted and shifting values, and therefore an unsafe world. There are new and puzzling uncertainties in the realm of moral values. Society had consistently ignored, even

in its most fundamental thinking, the fact that the universal problem of the relationship between men and women had never been harmoniously settled. Now for the first time in the world's history there has been a wide breakdown of this comfortable assurance. What was one time considered a fact to be accepted, even though some might go so far as to find it a fact to be deplored, is now on an open road to new consideration as a problem which must find new adjustments and solutions.

But where shall we find a moral standard against which this new solution to the problem of sex can be measured? Confusion has come out of the very breakdown of the old provincialism. The swift commingling of international life during the war has demonstrated to men and women of plain thinking that there are varying standards of moral integrity and not one standard which the whole world acknowledges, whatever its practice. What were one time interesting facts in mission study textbooks or in the *National Geographic Magazine* have become a real but confusing experience to a great proportion of the human race who have been jostled out of their old provincialism into a world consciousness. From our own country perhaps 2,500,000 men went overseas; if they have had any faint sense of this bewilderment, not only they but their families at home will increasingly register it in our national life.

The inevitable consequence is the question—why any system of morals? This uncertainty has met for the moment an ebbing tide of religious certitude, or rather, a change in the point of view from which ordinary men and women of limited experience have always judged religious values. The result can be nothing less than dangerous bewilderment.

Who is to create this new moral standard for a waiting world? Women have in the past had most of their thinking done for them. Will they now think and speak and act for themselves in facing the trend toward a more or less current philosophy that strenuous morality is foolish and unnecessary? The winds of freedom have blown through the world, clearing away many ancient hindrances to the life abundant, but dangerously breaking down at many points resistances and convictions which safeguard society. There are those who excuse their freedom from ordinary moral standards as a desire "to live fully"; but women know that this so-called "fullness of life" is a masculine point of view and can come only to given individuals and not to such groups as the family. Women also know that men and women do not start equally in the game of living life fully.

It will be a difficult task to establish for a new world a convincing moral standard. The Church registers the current unwillingness to tackle it in its disproportionate emphasis upon the necessity of meeting a thousand minor moral

demands, while this central moral necessity often goes by more or less unchallenged. It is too often true that the accredited marks of the follower of Christ seem to be one's freedom from certain relatively small unmoralities, while the breaking of certain social conventions, founded not on moral grounds but on social customs, seems to have been elevated to the rank of deadly sin.

Whether or not women are to bring new solutions to this ancient problem is not the first question. The Church is the natural and logical place for the manufacture of a new product—the thought and vision of men *and* women at this point.

3. Old standards in the realm of material values are proving inadequate. Everyone seems to be more or less conscious that we are on our way to a new social order, and it is reasonably sure that the key word to that order of society will be the word "personality." But no person or group of persons has yet thought out the implications of that word "personality," so we keep on sounding the watchword of the old order, "property."

One of the most baffling heritages of the war is a deepening material-mindedness on the part not of one group but of the whole of society. A recent discussion of current economic problems reveals the fact that not more than one out of every ten adult workers in the United States is employed in the manufacture of necessary

things. What social standard of valuation will in the future decide how much productive energy is to go into non-essentials?

In a recent book proposing a new basis for world economics, the author builds his argument on the theory that the power that most surely binds people together into social groups is their needs and not their money. A new grouping of society has just been discovered—the consumer. The consumer is no longer merely a field to be cultivated by the professional advertiser; he or she is a force to be wielded in the struggle to stabilize the economic world.

Women are gradually becoming aware of their power as the spenders of the world. Although writers on economic subjects usually refer to the consumer as the *X* of an economic formula, they know in their sub-technical hearts, and frequently confess, that this powerful *X* is Mrs. Smith, housewife. If she as spender is determining the needs of the world and so directing the forces of world production, her responsibility is as wide as the kingdom of world finance.

At a recent conference of undergraduate college women a discussion of the Christian solution of the economic problems underlying the labor movement resolved itself into a discussion of the power of women as value-makers. It was freely recognized that the standard of material values demanded or desired by the women of a community sets the pace of that competition in industry and commerce which is one of the root

causes of social injustice and human exploitation.

Women are thinking out an answer to the question: What are the real values of life? They are ready to help in determining what Jesus meant by his insistence that life was to be lived abundantly. Because they are women their answer is bound to be not in terms of material possessions, but rather in terms of personality and a fair chance for self-fulfilment for every member of the community.

4. Perhaps because the world is tired, because it is a world of twisted and shifting values, it is a world bewildered in its search for God. There are a hundred programs of reconstruction, but there is no approach to unanimity in answering the question upon which the future hangs: What is life for? The experience of the war has given little light at this point. In one of Will Comfort's animal stories, there is this wise saying: "It dawned on him at last that when you go out with the idea of killing a creature, you may get its attitude toward death, but you won't know much about how it regards life."

We have built a Christian ethic upon prohibitions; we have been more ready to say what life is not than to define what life really is. The modern woman, if she is awake, sees life new in contrast with the generations in which women have not been able to find full expression. It is to her now a depository of big experiences and she will be attracted by no philosophy which

does not comprehend the abundant life of which she has had a glimpse. She is searching, often unconsciously, for a God who will bring human life to its farthest goal of self-fulfilment. For if the very unrest and bewilderment of the world of today is merely a fumbling attempt on the part of groups of various sorts to search out God, women will be peculiarly able to understand this world-wide instinct for a God who will set us free to become our best selves. Because women have never found themselves as women they will more easily understand the fellowship outreach of great national and social groups which are struggling today for self-determination, whose labored steps, however many the mistakes, seem to be aspiring steps toward the God of us all.

Much of the confusion in today's bewildering search for God seems to come out of the fact that many thinking people who have accepted as the standard of their service the principles of Christ and who are committed to the principle of organization for effective service are not looking to the Church but are searching for a different medium for Christianizing the world. Women in the labor movement are rarely even respectfully tolerant of any suggestion that the Church might factor in the struggle to bring in the new order of social justice.

In part this attitude of mind can be explained by their ignorance of the new vigor of the Church in trying to meet the problems of indus-

trial readjustment. But there is another reason for this disregard of the Church in the crisis of today. Women who are on the firing-line of the cause of justice for women workers are there because they are single-minded in their search for solutions to the industrial problem. Neither in their own ranks nor in the individuals and organizations with which they reckon can they tolerate a divided mind, a faltering conviction. They know that the Church has said to one group in society: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever," and to another group it has said: "Renounce your dream of life as a thing to be enjoyed; here is a way by which you can endure it."

One of the leaders of this group of women thinkers has said: "The word 'goodness' to the working woman has come to mean the equivalent of 'resignation.' What we need is an interpretation of the word 'goodness' which will make it synonymous with initiative, courage, aspiration, and the right to look for fulfilment of life."

Even now the world is beginning to be articulate in its desire for good tidings of life which will give vigor and strength in place of fatigue, purposeful direction rather than a drifting aimlessness. It is waiting for a voice which will say: "What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you."

The adventure before the Church is the adventure of living Christianity to the ultimate.

What quality of constructive faith, what intensity of intelligent purposefulness will women bring to the discovery of what Jesus meant by the abundant life?

If there could be within the Church wider recognition of the fact that there is a world woman's movement, it might be possible to divert to the building of the new order the spiritual reserves of this fresh young force, the power of the women of the world.